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## OFFICE OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

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Linda McCulloch  
Superintendent

**September 2, 2003**

To: OPI MASS Representatives

From: Madalyn Quinlan, Chief of Staff

Subject: Summary of OPI Activities for September 2003

Welcome to the beginning of a new school year. Here is a summary of the current activities at the Office of Public Instruction for September 2003. This summary can also be found at [www.opi.state.mt.us/MASSUpdates/](http://www.opi.state.mt.us/MASSUpdates/).

### Office of the State Superintendent

#### **Highlights of State Superintendent Linda McCulloch's Activities for the Summer 2003:**

- ☐ Addressed the delegates attending Girls State at Carroll College and hosted Cassie Brownell from Conrad, who was elected Superintendent of Public Instruction at Girls State
- ☐ Met with stakeholders concerning the reauthorization of Head Start; sent joint letter with the Governor and other stakeholders to the Montana Congressional Delegation on effects of Head Start reauthorization on Montana
- ☐ Attended high school and college graduation ceremonies
- ☐ Attended a White House Rose Garden event with President Bush and other State Superintendents
- ☐ Attended the summer meeting of the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO)
- ☐ Participated in the CCSSO and US Department of Education "brain trust" on problems facing rural states in President Bush's No Child Left Behind law
- ☐ Participated in a panel discussion organized by the State Higher Education Executive Officers on K-16 issues for rural states
- ☐ Worked with New York Times reporter, Sam Dillon, on a news story on rural problems in President Bush's No Child Left Behind law
- ☐ Attended meetings of the Land Board, Board of Regents, Board of Public Education, and the Education Forum
- ☐ Participated in the 3rd annual *READ Montana! Summit*, addressing the Montana Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development
- ☐ Met with representatives from the Northwest Regional Education Laboratory
- ☐ Participated in the School Renewal Commission meetings
- ☐ Accepted, with the governor, a six-year, \$20.2 million Reading First Grant from the US Department of Education
- ☐ Released information to the public regarding the performance of Montana students on NAEP, SAT, ACT and adequate yearly progress under NCLB

- Participated in a statewide event to kick off Albertson's stores and Montana food banks to distribute free books to Title I children
- Addressed the legislative Interim Committee on Education and Local Government on rural state issues in President Bush's No Child Left Behind law
- Participated in the METNET site presentation to schools on MT Statewide Accountability System for Education
- Met with Congressman Rehberg's education liaison

### **Welcome to Cathy Warhank, OPI Legal Counsel**

This summer, Cathy Warhank joined the Office of the State Superintendent as OPI Legal Counsel. Cathy received her law degree from the University of Montana Law School in December 2002 and passed the Montana Bar exam in February 2003. Prior to entering law school, Cathy was the principal at Riverview Elementary School in Great Falls. In addition to her legal knowledge, Cathy brings 28 years of teaching and administrative experience to her new position at OPI. Cathy replaces Jeff Weldon, who accepted a position as legal counsel with the Billings Public Schools in July. We thank Jeff for the excellent service that he provided to the Office of Public Instruction and Montana schools while working at OPI. And, we welcome Cathy on board. Cathy can be reached at 406-444-4402 or [cwarhank@state.mt.us](mailto:cwarhank@state.mt.us).

### **September Board of Public Education Meeting**

The Board of Public Education will hold its next regular meeting September 11-12. The board will meet in the Castle Room at the University of Montana Law School in Missoula on September 11 and at Polson High School Room 104, 111 4<sup>th</sup> Ave E., Polson, MT on September 12. BPE agenda items the OPI will be involved with include the regular Superintendent's Report, a No Child Left Behind Update, a Student Assessment Update, and information on teacher certification reciprocity for the Western Governors' University. Contacts are Board of Public Education Executive Secretary Steve Meloy (406) 444-6576 or Deputy Superintendent Spencer Sartorius, (406) 444-4434, [ssartorius@state.mt.us](mailto:ssartorius@state.mt.us).

### **Directory of Montana Schools**

The 2003-2004 Directory of Montana Schools has been sent to the printer. We expect printed copies to be available by mid-September. Due to budget constraints, there will be no printed copies distributed to Montana schools for school year 2003-2004. The Portable Document File (PDF) of the 2004 Directory is now available on our web site at: <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/Directory/>.

Printed copies of the 2003-2004 Directory of Montana Schools will be available by mid-to-late September 2003 at \$11.50 each, including shipping and handling by contacting:

**Advanced Litho Printing**  
**226 9th Ave. S.**  
**Great Falls, MT 59405-4034**  
**(406) 453-0393**  
**FAX (406) 454-1271**

### **Stay Connected to OPI Official E-mail**

Along with OPI's release of information regarding NCLB and Adequate Yearly Progress, we learned that a number of school district leaders are not connected to the OPI official e-mail service. The Office of Public Instruction has made repeated efforts to communicate to school district leaders that the "official email system" is OPI's primary vehicle for communicating with district offices. In order to set-up and maintain the e-mail service, districts must go to the OPI

webpage and list the district e-mail address(es) to which the OPI messages will be sent. If this list is not updated when your district e-mail addresses change, the communication link will be broken. To forward the messages from your OPI account to your district email accounts, follow the instructions provided at <http://www.metnet.state.mt.us/autoforward.html>. If you have any questions or need a computer, please contact our METNET Help Desk at 444-1626.

### **Want to Review the E-mails Sent to Your District by OPI this Past Summer?**

Here's the link: [http://www.metnet.state.mt.us/Official\\_Mail/](http://www.metnet.state.mt.us/Official_Mail/). Note the arrows to move to next and previous pages on the right side (upper third) of the Official Mail page.

### **News on Electronic Reporting to OPI: User Names and Passwords**

In early July, OPI mailed to districts the User Names and passwords that districts will need to access the OPI Internet Reporting and Information Service (IRIS) on the Web. Due to Montana State security requirements, passwords will automatically change every two months on the first day of the month. These user names and passwords provide the user with access to all IRIS programs, including the upcoming Annual Data Collection and MAEFAIRS Fall Enrollment reporting. If you lose your letter, you may request an additional copy of the letter to be sent to your central office. No passwords will be given out over the phone or via e-mail. Please contact OPI at 444-3448 if you need assistance with IRIS user names or passwords.

### **Annual Data Collection Training: Beginners and Refresher Courses**

Each year in October, school districts in Montana submit information to the Office of Public Instruction through the Annual Data Collection (ADC). Through the ADC reporting process, OPI collects essential information from school districts on school personnel and teaching assignments, district calendars, non-public school enrollment, dropout data, numbers of gifted students, and numbers of Limited English Proficient students. Packets with the ADC information will be mailed to district offices on September 5.

OPI encourages all school districts to report their data electronically for the Annual Data Collection. Training is scheduled in five locations:

Sept. 17	Miles City High School	9:30 am – 12:00 pm	New user training
		1:30 pm - 3:30 pm	Overview of changes
Sept. 18	Billings Lincoln Center	9:30 am - 11:30 am	Overview of changes
Sept. 19	Helena OPI Training Room	9:30 am - 11:30 am	Overview of changes
Sept. 24	Kalispell Jr. High	9:30 am – 12:00 pm	New user training
		1:30 pm - 3:30 pm	Overview of changes
Sept. 25	Great Falls Admin. Center	10:00 am - 12:30 pm	Overview of changes

This year we are offering two types of training. The New User Training is for school personnel who have not previously completed the Annual Data Collection electronically. The Overview of Changes is for new and experienced users to learn what's new for 2003, specifically the changes to the Accreditation process. New users should plan on attending both the morning and afternoon sessions in either Miles City or Kalispell. On-line registration will be available on September 5<sup>th</sup> at <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/regforms/ADCTraining/ADCTraining.html>. OPI Contact: Karen Richem, 444-2410, or [krichem@state.mt.us](mailto:krichem@state.mt.us).

### **Quick Reference: Facts About Montana Education**

Ever wish that you had a quick reference tool about Montana education that you could give to a school board member, parent or the media? Reach for the 2003 version of the *Facts About Montana Education*. This OPI publication is now available on-line at

<http://www.opi.state.mt.us/pdf/measurement/edfacts.pdf>. OPI Contact: Andy Boehm, Research Specialist, (406) 444-0375, [aboehm@state.mt.us](mailto:aboehm@state.mt.us).

### **7<sup>th</sup> Annual Montana Teacher Forum: *No Teacher Left Behind***

Teaching in the days of “No Child Left Behind” may leave many teachers feeling overwhelmed by paperwork and unrealistic expectations. How do we cope with these changes and keep our passion for teaching? The Montana Teacher Forum will explore ways to support beginning teachers, provide enrichment for experienced teachers, and offer new teaching opportunities for teachers nearing the end of their careers.

**Location:** Red Lion Colonial Hotel, 2301 Colonial Drive, Helena

**Date & Time:** Monday, September 15, 2003 8:00 am – 4 pm

**Cost:** \$25

Keynote speaker Barnett Barry will provide the springboard to inspire lively group discussions and interaction. The forum will also feature remarks from Superintendent of Public Instruction Linda McCulloch and 2003 Teacher of the Year Jon Runnalls. Small Group Sessions will focus on Supporting Beginning Teachers, Enriching Experienced Teachers, and Exploring New Opportunities. All Montana educators are invited to attend. For a brochure and registration information go to <http://www.mea-mft.org/03brochure.pdf>. Contact Shirley Chovanak, MEA-MFT (800-398-0826 or [schovanak@mea-mft.org](mailto:schovanak@mea-mft.org)).

### **Eight Montana Teachers Recognized for Achieving National Board Certification**

In conjunction with the Montana Teacher Forum, Lt. Governor Karl Ohs and State Superintendent Linda McCulloch will hold a reception to honor eight Montana teachers who achieved National Board Certification in 2002. The reception will be held on September 15, 2003 at 4:30 p.m. in the Governor’s Reception Room at the State Capitol. Each teacher will receive a \$3,000 stipend for reaching this high standard of achievement. Congratulations to:

- ☐ Janet Allen – Billings High School
- ☐ Beverly Gustafson Bakker – Billings Elementary
- ☐ Charles Deisher – Terry K-12 Schools
- ☐ Steve Gardiner – Billings High School
- ☐ Margaret Leverton – Corvallis K-12 Schools
- ☐ Vincent Long – Billings High School
- ☐ Lyn McKinney – Billings High School
- ☐ Alyson Mike - East Helena Elementary

Twenty-eight National Board Certified teachers are currently teaching in Montana schools.

### **Montana Professional Teaching Foundation supports Montana Teachers**

State Superintendent Linda McCulloch serves on the Board of Directors of the Montana Professional Teaching Foundation. The foundation, created in 1996 by MEA-MFT, works to enhance the teaching profession and promote quality education in Montana. Programs sponsored by the Montana Professional Teaching Foundation include the annual Montana Teacher Forum, Montana Teacher of the Year, and National Board Certification scholarships. Click on <http://www.mea-mft.org/nbcnew.htm> to find out how Montana teachers can become National Board certified and how to apply for financial assistance. For more information about the foundation, please contact Cathy Warner, 406-447-1479 or [cwarner@mea-mft.org](mailto:cwarner@mea-mft.org).

### **Education Community Urges Governor to use Surplus to Fund Public Education**

On August 7, State Superintendent Linda McCulloch and leaders of a number of Montana’s Education groups sent a letter to Governor Judy Martz respectfully requesting she consider

providing \$10-\$14 million in additional funding for K-12 education during the 2005 biennium, either through the flexibility fund or through additional funding formula increases. Such an action would require the convening of a special session of the Montana Legislature. Educators pointed out in the letter that in the 2005 biennium, state funds for public schools would drop by more than \$24 million in comparison with FY 2003 funding levels. This is a severe loss of state resources available to local Montana schools. OPI Contact: Joe Lamson, 406-444-3160, [jlamson@state.mt.us](mailto:jlamson@state.mt.us).

### **Montana Consolidated Application Accountability Plan Approved by US Department of Education**

In June, the US Department of Education approved the OPI's submittal of the Montana Consolidated Application Accountability Plan. This plan, which describes Montana's methodology for measuring Adequate Yearly Progress, is posted on the OPI Web site at <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/PDF/FEDPrgrms/ConsolAppWkbk.pdf>.

### **No Child Left Behind: Adequate Yearly Progress**

In August, the Office of Public Instruction (OPI) conducted five regional workshops, including a METNET videoconference, to disseminate information about President Bush's No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) and the calculation of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). As discussed at the workshops, NCLB requires notification of schools, districts, and the public of the AYP status of schools and districts. The notification is required by the first day of school. Following the notification, districts were to send to OPI by August 29, 2003, the evidence they believed warranted a change in their AYP status. The following is the timeline State Superintendent Linda McCulloch and OPI staff established concerning changes in AYP status due to the examination of the district-submitted evidence and for districts that were candidates for Safe Harbor:

- |                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| September 15, 2003 | Recommendations to Superintendent McCulloch concerning change of status                    |
| September 17, 2003 | Mail notifications to district Authorized Representatives concerning changes in AYP status |
| September 23, 2003 | Press release from OPI to state and local news media                                       |

OPI Contact: Al McMilin, Accreditation Specialist, [amcmilin@state.mt.us](mailto:amcmilin@state.mt.us), or (406) 444-3128

The news release from Superintendent Linda McCulloch on the "Adequate Yearly Progress" status of all Montana schools and districts is posted on the OPI webpage at <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/Supt/NewsStories/03EAD88B48.nclk>. A list of the status of each school and district as of 8/15/03 is posted at <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/Supt/NewsStories/03EB5306F9.nclk>. A revised listing will be posted on September 23 upon completion of the appeal period.

### **No Child Left Behind: Highly Qualified Teachers**

On September 2, the Office of Public Instruction submitted to the US Department of Education the section of the Consolidated State Application related to performance indicators for limited English proficient students, highly qualified teachers, and learning environments that are safe, drug free, and conducive to learning. In its application, OPI proposed its definition of a Highly Qualified Teacher to comply with the requirements of President Bush's No Child Left Behind Act. It remains to be seen whether the federal government will accept the Montana definition.



*What is the Montana definition of a “highly qualified” teacher?*

According to Montana law and administrative rule, Montana teachers meet the definition of highly qualified teacher if they are licensed and endorsed in the areas in which they teach.

*What is the federal definition of a “highly qualified” teacher?*

The federal requirement that teachers be highly qualified applies to public elementary or secondary school teachers who teach a core academic subject. The term “core academic subjects” means English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography.

The NCLB definition of “highly qualified” means that the teacher:

- ☐ Has obtained full State certification as a teacher or passed the State teacher licensing examination and holds a license to teach in the State, and does not have certification or licensure requirements waived on an emergency, temporary, or provisional basis;
- ☐ Holds a minimum of a bachelor’s degree; and
- ☐ Has demonstrated subject area competence in each of the academic subjects in which the teacher teaches, in a manner determined by the State and in compliance with Section 9101(23) of ESEA.

The federal definition goes on to state that for a middle school or secondary teacher who is new to the profession, “highly qualified” means that the teacher has met the requirements listed above, holds at least a bachelor's degree, and has demonstrated a high level of competency in each of the academic subjects in which the teacher teaches by:

- ☐ Passing a rigorous State academic subject test in each of the academic subjects in which the teacher teaches (which may consist of a passing level of performance on a State-required certification or licensing test or tests in each of the academic subjects in which the teacher teaches); **or**
- ☐ Successful completion, in each of the academic subjects in which the teacher teaches, of an academic major, a graduate degree, coursework equivalent to an undergraduate academic major, or advanced certification or credentialing.

More detailed information on the NCLB definition of “highly qualified teacher” can be found at <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/SIP/TitleIguidance2002.doc>.

**United States Senate Youth Scholarship Program**

High school juniors and seniors who meet the eligibility criteria listed below are encouraged to participate in the US Senate Youth Scholarship Program for 2003-04. Two Montana students and a first and second alternate will be selected to participate in the Annual Senate Youth Scholarship Program. The top two Montana students will receive a \$5,000 college scholarship and a one-week, all expense paid trip to Washington, D.C., February 28-March 6, 2004.

Applicants must:

- ☐ be a junior or graduating senior in a Montana high school;
- ☐ be elected to a student government office or have been a Boys/Girls State Delegate for the 2003-04 school year;
- ☐ be actively involved in the school and community;
- ☐ be a permanent resident of the United States; and
- ☐ be a Montana resident.

Interested students should see their high school counselors to sign up for the qualifying exam given in October. Potential awardees compete for this scholarship by taking a 50-point exam on

current politics, American History, and the U.S. Constitution. The top ten scorers are then required to record videotaped responses to a set of questions provided by the Office of Public Instruction, U.S. Senate Youth Program staff. Two delegates and two alternates are chosen from the ten semifinalists. The result of this competition will be forwarded and the William Randolph Hearst Foundation will announce winners in December 2003. For more information, go to <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/scholarships/index.html>. OPI Contact: Carol Gneckow, (406) 444-2417, [cgneckow@state.mt.us](mailto:cgneckow@state.mt.us).

### **Assessment**

The August edition of the electronic newsletter, **Join Us in Measuring Progress** (JUMP), is online at <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/pdf/assessment/newsletters/Aug2003AssessNews.pdf>

### **Public Release of 2003 Iowa Tests Results set for September 4**

The Office of Public Instruction will do the annual release of the 2003 student test scores for the Iowa tests for 4th, 8th, and 11th grade students to the Montana News Media on Thursday, September 4, 2003. This is the annual release of test score data that is required by Montana law. Schools and districts may want to review their 2003 test results as the media may be contacting you for comments and information beginning September 4. All test results and the press release will also be posted on the OPI Web Page on September 4. OPI Contact: Judy Snow, State Assessment Director, [jsnow@state.mt.us](mailto:jsnow@state.mt.us), and 406-444-3656.

### **OPI Needs Updated Test Coordinator Information by September 25, 2003**

If a different person is test coordinator for your district this year, please notify Lindy Miller at the Office of Public Instruction by September 25. Please provide the name, title, email address, and telephone number to Lindy at [lindmiller@state.mt.us](mailto:lindmiller@state.mt.us) or 406-444-6774

### **Assessment Calendar Online**

The calendar includes current information on important testing dates, deadlines, and training. It is updated frequently: <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/PDF/Assessment/calendar.pdf>

### **Assessment and AYP Overviews Available in PowerPoint on OPI Website**

- ☐ A PowerPoint presentation with updated assessment information is online for use in your districts: <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/PDF/Assessment/03AssessOverview.pdf>  
OPI Contact: Judy Snow, 406-444-3656 or [jsnow@state.mt.us](mailto:jsnow@state.mt.us)
- ☐ The PowerPoint presentation that OPI staff used at regional meetings in August to explain Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) is online:  
<http://www.opi.state.mt.us/PDF/Title/MTSASEWrkshpAug21.ppt>. In addition, a video tape is available for checkout from the Office of Public Instruction Resource Center.  
OPI Contact Raelen Williard, [rwilliard@state.mt.us](mailto:rwilliard@state.mt.us) or 406-444-2082.

### **CRT Testing Window Extended**

Because of spring break schedules in many districts, the testing window for the criterion-referenced test has been extended from two weeks to three weeks. It will begin a week earlier than originally announced. The new window is March 29 – April 16, 2004. We appreciate Measured Progress' flexibility in accommodating the needs of Montana schools.

### **Preparing for the Criterion-Referenced Test**

The criterion-referenced test developed by Measured Progress, Inc., the Montana Office and Public Instruction, and Montana educators will be administered to students in grades 4, 8, and

10 in reading and math March 29 – April 16, 2004. The test will consist of multiple choice and constructed response items.

Since the test is aligned to Montana content standards, continued quality teaching to the standards is the best preparation. In addition, Measured Progress will provide samples items including constructed response items. Those will be available online by November as will the test blueprints.

To see samples from a similar test before November, the Wyoming Comprehensive Assessment System (WYCAS) has sample and released items on its website.

- ☐ Sample Items: <http://www.measuredprogress.org/wycas/TestResults/TestResults.htm>
- ☐ Released Items: <http://www.measuredprogress.org/wycas/TestResults/TestResults.htm>

### **Measured Progress Presents: *Examining Student Work***

Measured Progress recently sent invitations and registration information to Montana schools for October workshops. The interactive one-day workshops, *Examining Student Work*, will be presented at five regional sites. Please register online by September 19 at <http://iregister.measuredprogress.org>. If your school does not have online access, contact Nancy Hall at Measured Progress: 1-888-792-2741

Date	Site	Location
October 7	Missoula	Holiday Inn
October 7	Billings	Sheraton Hotel
October 8	Bozeman	Holiday Inn
October 9	Glasgow	Cottonwood Inn
October 9	Great Falls	Best Western Hotel

### Educational Opportunity and Equity

#### **Reading First Grant Awarded to Montana**

The staff at OPI successfully applied for a competitive Reading First grant from the U.S. Department of Education. Montana will now receive \$2.9 million dollars each year for six years, as part of President Bush's No Child Left Behind Act. Reading First funds are dedicated to help states and local school districts prevent reading difficulties by establishing high-quality comprehensive reading instruction by well-trained teachers in kindergarten through grade three. For more information, go to <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/ReadingFirst/index.html>.

OPI Contact: Debbie Hunsaker, Reading Program Specialist, 444-0733, [dhunsaker@state.mt.us](mailto:dhunsaker@state.mt.us).

#### **Education of American Indian Students Symposium**

The U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, the Interwest Equity Assistance Center, and Montana State University-Billings will host a one and a half day symposium focusing on the unique educational challenges facing American Indian students in Montana. The symposium will provide information to parents, teachers and administrators regarding their rights and responsibilities under the No Child Left Behind law, language acquisition, parental involvement, teacher competency, and Federal and State civil rights enforcement processes.

**Location:** Montana State University - Billings  
**Date & Time:** Monday, September 22, 2003 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm  
Tuesday, September 23, 2003 8:30 am – 3:30 pm



**Cost:** No Fee.  
**Registration Required:** Space is limited

Registration information was mailed to elementary and secondary schools in Montana on August 1, 2003. To ensure receipt of a registration packet with conference and hotel information, please send an email with your mailing address to [Heidi.Kutcher@ed.gov](mailto:Heidi.Kutcher@ed.gov). For more information contact: [Heidi.Kutcher@ed.gov](mailto:Heidi.Kutcher@ed.gov).

### **American Indian Heritage Day - September 26, 2003**

As we begin this school year, please remember that the 1997 Montana Legislature passed a law designating the fourth Friday of September as "American Indian Heritage Day." This year, the special day falls on September 26. This law means that Montana's school districts are to "conduct appropriate exercises during the school day commemorating the role of Indians in Montana's past and present." This legislative action grants American Indian Heritage Day the same commemorative status as Columbus Day, Lincoln's and Washington's birthdays, and Flag Day.

Many schools across Montana have designated the entire fourth week of September to be dedicated to American Indians. While a day dedicated to the study of American Indian heritage is a start, and a week is better, the State Superintendent urges all educators to include the rich history, cultural heritage, and contemporary issues of Indians as a part of all curriculums and disciplines throughout the entire school year as passed by the Montana Legislature in 1999, MCA 20-1-501, Indian Education for All.

There are many ways to incorporate Indian topics into your classroom. There are resources available for classroom lesson ideas from the OPI Web page, <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/IndianEd/>. Use the American Indian Heritage Day to start the inclusion of Indian studies in your school: extend that day into a week - then extend it into every classroom and every curriculum year-round. If you agree that ALL children deserve an education, then make sure that your classroom addresses the heritage, background and experiences of ALL your students and their neighbors, with whom they will continue to learn, work and reside with or near. We also ask that you let us know in what activities your school participated. A form for this can be located at <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/IndianEd/>. Have a rewarding and enriching American Indian Heritage Day this September 26. OPI Contact: Lori Falcon, American Indian Education Specialist, [falcon@state.mt.us](mailto:falcon@state.mt.us) or (406) 444-3013.

### **Montana GEAR UP State Conference**

The Montana GEAR UP Conference is an opportunity for GEAR UP staff at the local level to come together to attend workshops and training on implementing GEAR UP components. It is a chance to share ideas and attend workshops that will address GEAR UP goals relating to academics, college awareness and partnerships.

**Location:** Heritage Inn, Great Falls, MT

**Date & Time:** September 22-23, 2003

**No registration required.**

Invited speakers and presenters include Henrietta Mann from MSU, BJ Granbery, Debbie Hunsaker, and Lori Falcon from OPI. Calvin One Deer Gavin, Director of Palomar College GEAR UP Program, from San Marcos, CA has also been invited to speak. Representatives from the College Board's Advanced Placement (AP) and Pre-AP Programs will present at the

conference. The Montana GEAR UP Conference is open to participants in the Montana GEAR UP Program. Contact: Sandy Merdinger, GEAR UP Director, 444-0317.

#### Career and Vocational/Technical Education

##### **Welcome to Diane Fiedler, OPI Business and Marketing Education Specialist**

Diana Fiedler has joined the Career, Technical and Adult Education staff as Business and Marketing Education Specialist. She replaces Cheryl Graham. Diana has work experience both in the classroom and in private industry. Prior to moving to Montana, Diana taught in the Omack school district in Washington. For the last two years she has worked for Anderson Zurmuehlen in Helena. Help us warmly welcome Diana. Diana can be contacted at 406-444-7991 or [dfiedler@state.mt.us](mailto:dfiedler@state.mt.us).

##### **Interested in Starting a Health Occupations Education Program in Your District?**

The Montana Health Occupations Education (HOE) program seeks to meet present and predicted needs for health care workers within a health care delivery system that is characterized by diversity and changing technologies. Health Occupations Education investigates the health care delivery system, its services, occupations, and related sciences. Topics include the study of medical terminology, medical mathematics, microbiology, anatomy and physiology, diseases/disorders, diagnoses, treatments, patient/client care regimens, career development, and future technological innovations. Work-based learning strategies include professional guest speakers and job shadowing. Skills in science, mathematics, communications, social studies and health are reinforced in these courses. Students obtain the knowledge necessary to satisfy the requirements for entry-level health care jobs such as a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) as well as pursue advanced education in a health career major. In addition, students become knowledgeable consumers of health care in a consistently changing technological environment. HOE is dedicated to educating today's students for tomorrow's health care community.

Health Occupations Education is not new to Montana. The Billings Career Center has been offering a Med Careers course since 1990, and an Allied Health course was added five years ago. The Great Falls Public School District and Helena High School, with the help of the MSU-COT Great Falls, introduced Med Prep courses two years ago. Flathead High School offers an introductory course as well as CNA training. Numerous school districts offer CNA training and school-to-work programs but at this point they are not recognized as formal Vocational Health Occupations Education programs. New HOE programs slated to start Fall 2003 include an on-line Health Occupations Education course being offered by Miles Community College, an EMT program in Thompson Falls, and new courses in Chinook and Fort Benton. Most of the current programs plan to offer Health Occupations Education courses as a vocational course.

Any school wishing to start a Vocational Health Occupations program will need to contact Theresa Sheldon, Health Occupations Education Specialist at the Office of Public Instruction, [tsheldon@state.mt.us](mailto:tsheldon@state.mt.us) or 406-444-0714. Schools districts will receive a **HOE New Program Review Application and New HOE Instructor Statement of Qualifications Packet**. After reviewing completed applications, those programs meeting specified criteria will be approved as a Vocational Health Occupations Program and be eligible for state and federal funding. For more information visit the Health Occupations Education program website at <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/CTE/HealthOccup.html>

### **Veterans Awarded Honorary High School Diplomas**

The 2003 Legislature approved OPI's request to establish an Honorary High School Diploma for veterans of World War II, the Korean Conflict and the Viet Nam Conflict, who left high school before graduating to enlist in the armed services. A ceremony was held on May 27, 2003 in the Capitol Rotunda to award Montana's first group of veterans with their honorary high school diplomas. To see highlights of the ceremony, click on <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/VeteransEd/awards.html>. The website includes a wonderful slide show with music of the ceremony, remarks by State Superintendent Linda McCulloch, the Helena Independent Record article, and additional photos from the day. OPI Contacts: Deb Casey, 444-4438, [dcasey@state.mt.us](mailto:dcasey@state.mt.us) or Jan Lombardi, 444-1641, [jlombardi@state.mt.us](mailto:jlombardi@state.mt.us).

### **Health Enhancement and Safety Division**

#### **School Discipline Data**

School districts will be able to report school discipline data (formerly called suspension/expulsion data) online this year (school year 2003-2004). There are very few changes to the data reporting requirements from last year. Packets will be mailed to school districts the first part of September. METNET training is scheduled for September 29<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 p.m. The training, which should be no more than two hours, will review data requirements and provide instructions for electronic submission. Registration forms listing METNET sites will be included in the packets and electronic registration will also be available effective Thursday, September 4 at this website address: <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/RegForms/DisciplineData/> OPI Contact: Marion Erp (phone: 406-444-1951, e-mail: [merp@state.mt.us](mailto:merp@state.mt.us)) or Pat Reichert (phone: 406-444-4430, e-mail: [preichert@state.mt.us](mailto:preichert@state.mt.us)).

### **Montana Receives National Governor's Association Grant for State Summit**

Montana is one of thirteen states to receive a \$10,000 award from the National Governors' Association to conduct a state summit on extra learning opportunities (ELO's). Montana's summit, scheduled for March of 2004, will focus on increasing awareness about the benefits of out-of-school-time programs and improving the quantity and quality of ELO's across the state. The summit will convene state agency officials, public and private sector youth organizations, and community partners to expand state efforts to deliver after-school activities and services.

States were selected based on submissions that demonstrated commitments to providing their students with extra learning opportunities and to strengthening after-school networks. The project is the result of a partnership between the Office of Public Instruction's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center Program, the Montana Child Care Resource and Referral Network, and the Governor's Office. OPI Contact Gary Pfister, 406-444-3000 or [gpfister@state.mt.us](mailto:gpfister@state.mt.us).

### **Montana Fires**

Information about smoke conditions and health concerns in your community can be found on the Department of Public Health and Human Services Web site at <http://www.deq.state.mt.us/FireUpdates/index.asp>. This site gives health information and current fire condition updates. For locales not included on the website, contact your local city/county health department. OPI Contact: Rick Chiotti, 444-1963, [rchiotti@state.mt.us](mailto:rchiotti@state.mt.us).

### **Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)**

As the school year begins, Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies: The Montana Coalition (HMHB) in conjunction with Covering Kids and Families is launching its annual Back-to-School enrollment drive. This initiative encourages parents of uninsured children to make enrollment in CHIP or

other low cost or free health care coverage programs a top priority on their back-to-school checklists.

HMHB and the Montana Rural Education Association are asking schools to help step up efforts to increase the number of children enrolled in CHIP and other low cost or free health coverage programs. By calling a toll-free hotline number (1-800-421-6667), you can get more information about the Back-to-School project and order free materials (bookmarks and fliers) to distribute to new and returning students. These materials will provide information about how parents can enroll their children in a low cost or free health care program. Contact: Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies at 1-800-421-6667 or email HMHB Executive Director Mike Cooney at [www.mcooney@hmhb-mt.org](mailto:www.mcooney@hmhb-mt.org) should you have any questions. To learn more about Covering Kids and Families, please visit [www.coveringkids.org](http://www.coveringkids.org).

### **Diabetes Resources for Schools:**

Several resources to assist schools in keeping children with diabetes safe, healthy, and ready to learn are available.

- The Montana Diabetes Project has developed a manual, *Children With Diabetes - A Resource Guide for Schools*, which is available on-line at <http://ahec.msu.montana.edu/diabetes/default.htm> along with the manual inserts. This manual has listings of resources available in Montana. The Montana Diabetes Project also has a “library” of videos that may be used in training school personnel. Call 406-444-6677 for more information on titles and availability.
- The National Diabetes Education Program (NDEP) has recently released their manual, *Helping the Student with Diabetes Succeed - A Guide for School Personnel*. This manual is available on the NDEP website: <http://ndep.nih.gov/materials/pubs/schoolguide.pdf>.
- The American Diabetes Association has developed a curriculum, *Diabetes Care Tasks at School: What Key Personnel Need to Know*, which can act as a companion to the NDEP school guide. This curriculum can be found on the ADA website: [www.diabetes.org/main/community/advocacy/school/schooltraining.jsp](http://www.diabetes.org/main/community/advocacy/school/schooltraining.jsp)

### **2003 Youth Risk Behavior Survey**

The YRBS reports are expected to be ready for distribution to participating districts by late-September. Participating district superintendents will receive a hardcopy of the 110-page High School report. The OPI will send the Grades 7-8 and Alternative School reports at the same time if your district participated at these levels also. The 2003 YRBS reports will be available in their entirety at [www.opi.state.mt.us/YRBS](http://www.opi.state.mt.us/YRBS) and will continue to be available there until the next YRBS report in 2005.

The Summary Report, detailing high school trend data and grade level data of a few selection questions in table and graph formats, will be mailed upon completion to both the superintendent and the YRBS contact person for your district. OPI Contact: Susan Court, 406-444-3178, [scourt@state.mt.us](mailto:scourt@state.mt.us).

### **Mind and Body Booklet Encourages Physical Activities in the Classroom**

*Mind and Body* is a 104-page booklet that provides elementary classroom teachers with short activities designed to allow for students’ physical activity and movement through educational opportunities. Classroom teachers will appreciate the opportunity to provide their students with

physical activities, especially those teachers who may not have access to a health enhancement specialist. For more information about *Mind and Body* contact Susan Court at the Office of Public Instruction at 406-444-3178 or [scourt@state.mt.us](mailto:scourt@state.mt.us). *Mind and Body* is also available for downloading at [www.opi.state.mt.us/pdf/health/Mind&Body.pdf](http://www.opi.state.mt.us/pdf/health/Mind&Body.pdf).

### **Update on CDC's School Health Index Website**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Division of Adolescent and School Health, is pleased to announce that its website now includes two versions of the *School Health Index*, a self-assessment and planning guide: one that addresses school policies and programs related to physical activity, healthy eating, and a tobacco-free lifestyle; and one that only addresses issues related to physical activity and nutrition. Both can be found online at <http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/SHI>.

The *School Health Index* is designed for use at both the elementary and middle/high school levels. It was developed to provide schools with a tool to assess their policies and programs, compared with CDC school health guidelines. The SHI can help schools: (1) identify strengths and weaknesses, (2) prioritize actions for improvement, and (3) develop a team approach to implementing school guidelines recommendations.

### **Earth Day 2004 Poster Contest**

This fall the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is conducting a national art contest for students in grades K-12. The art contest is to promote the awareness of resource conservation and the importance of reducing waste and recycling waste. The winning K-6 artwork will be published as the EPA's 2004 Earth Day poster. The winning 7-12 art work will be used as the cover art on a CD-ROM on waste reduction and waste recycling resources that EPA will distribute nationally to schools. Entries must be postmarked by November 1, 2003. Go to [www.epa.gov/epaoswer/osw/edurec.htm](http://www.epa.gov/epaoswer/osw/edurec.htm) for eligibility, rules, and judging criteria. Contact: Paul Cestone, EPA, (703) 308-7285 or [Cestone.Paul@epa.gov](mailto:Cestone.Paul@epa.gov)

### **Prevention Programs that Improve Academic Achievement**

The Center for Substance Abuse Treatment has released a selected list of "model" programs that have positively impacted students' academic achievement and other school-related behaviors. The website has a variety of research based programs for pre-school, elementary, middle and high school students. Each program description also has contact information for further information. You can reach the website through: <http://www.northeastcapt.org/PRODUCTS/faq/faq75>.

### **Trends in Montana Teen Pregnancies**

The Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services has produced a comprehensive report on the trends in teen pregnancies in Montana. The report, *Trends in Montana Teen Pregnancies and Their Outcomes: 1981-2000*, looks at the decline in teen pregnancies over the past two decades. During these years, Montana experienced a 32.6 percent overall teen pregnancy rate reduction while the U.S. reduction was 15.5 percent. A portion of the report's data is based on findings from the Montana Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) in which many Montana schools participate. The report includes sections on the influences behind the declining trend in teen pregnancies (such as school-based comprehensive health education), best practices to sustain the downward trend, and recommendations to support a further reduction in teen pregnancy.

While the report shows that present methods are working to reduce teen pregnancies, it also suggests that just one approach is not adequate to meet the needs of all teens. Communities,



schools, and public health programs should continue providing comprehensive, interdisciplinary programs that teach responsible decision-making, delaying sexual activity, and contraceptive use. Go to [http://www.dphhs.state.mt.us/services/reports/trends\\_in\\_teen\\_pregnancies.pdf](http://www.dphhs.state.mt.us/services/reports/trends_in_teen_pregnancies.pdf) for an on-line copy. Print copies or more information about the report's content are available by contacting Stacey Anderson at DPHHS, 406-444-7331, or [standerson@state.mt.us](mailto:standerson@state.mt.us).

### School Nutrition Programs

#### **Annual Agreement**

Your annual agreement renewal with School Nutrition Programs is due by September 15, 2003. You will not receive commodity foods or meal reimbursement until all required materials are submitted. If you did not receive the mailing in July, please contact our office at: School Nutrition Programs (406) 444-2501.

#### **Victory Against Hunger Awards**

School Nutrition Programs would like to recognize the Blackfeet Community Nutrition Council in Browning, Montana for receiving one of the Congressional Hunger Center's annual "Victory Against Hunger" awards. The Council was given national recognition, and a \$1,000 cash prize. The Conrad School District was also nominated for this award, which recognizes local anti-hunger organizations throughout the United States that have worked effectively to fight hunger in their communities. For more information: Congressional Hunger Center at <http://www.hungercenter.org/> or OPI's School Nutrition Programs at (406) 444-2501.

#### **Healthy Schools - Healthy Kids**

The 2003 Montana Legislature supported healthy school environments by passing Joint Senate Resolution 2. OPI's School Nutrition Programs has received funding from the USDA to implement training and outreach efforts in Montana schools to help promote this resolution. OPI Contact: School Nutrition Programs, (406) 444-2501.

#### **Recess Before Lunch**

This policy has been very successful in Montana schools in helping improve the eating experience for students and school personnel. Molly Stenberg, RD, LN has been instrumental in the success of this program in Montana. For more information:

American School Food Service Association  
700 S. Washington St., Suite 300  
Alexandria, VA 22314  
(800) 877-8822  
[sfn@asfsa.org](mailto:sfn@asfsa.org)

Team Nutrition Program  
Montana State University  
Attn: Molly Stenberg  
(406) 994-5641  
[stenberg@montana.edu](mailto:stenberg@montana.edu)

#### **Defeating Diabetes in School Food Service Programs In Native American Communities**

October 28, 2003 in Billings ~ October 30, 2003 in Great Falls. Two regional workshops will be held for food service personnel working in schools on or near Native American communities. Contact: Katie Bark, Team Nutrition Program, Montana State University, (406) 994-5641, [kbark@state.mt.us](mailto:kbark@state.mt.us).

#### **Irradiated Beef**

A revised commodity ground beef specification will include irradiated patties and bulk fine grind for schools and institutions. The USDA will offer the new line products to order beginning January 1, 2004. Any school district that chooses irradiated ground beef products is strongly



encouraged to educate the community about irradiation prior to ordering the product. Education materials will be available. OPI Contact: School Nutrition Programs, (406) 444-2501.

#### Traffic Education Programs

##### **Traffic Education Reimbursement Payments**

Reimbursements for FY 2002-2003 were made August 26, 2003. Reimbursement this year was \$73.65 per student. Advices for county and district payments are available on the Web at <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/payments/index.html>. OPI Contact: David Huff, (406) 444-4396 or [dhuff@state.mt.us](mailto:dhuff@state.mt.us).

##### **Traffic Education Staff Changes**

Program specialist, Nancy Lunday, has taken a job as a special education teacher with East Helena Schools. Until Nancy can be replaced direct all traffic education inquiries to David Huff, (406) 444-4396 or [dhuff@state.mt.us](mailto:dhuff@state.mt.us).

#### School Finance and Pupil Transportation

##### **October 6 Enrollment Count**

The Fall Enrollment Count date is Monday, October 6, 2003. Students enrolled in the district, including gender and ethnicity information by grade level and school, must be reported to OPI. Information about ANB and instructions for entering the report on the MAEFAIRS electronic system are posted at: <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/SchoolFinance/Enrollment.html>. OPI Contact: Tal Redpath, (406) 444-3024, [redpath@state.mt.us](mailto:redpath@state.mt.us).

The MAEFAIRS electronic reporting system moves to the IRIS system (i.e., accessible through the IRIS tab on the OPI website) beginning with Fall Enrollment (October 2003). OPI will send instructions and a CD to registered MAEFAIRS users in late September in preparation for reporting enrollment after the October 6 count date. OPI Contact: Nica Carte, (406) 444-4401, [ncarte@state.mt.us](mailto:ncarte@state.mt.us).

##### **"10 Day Rule"**

A district may not count a student as enrolled if that student has been absent, with or without excuse, for 11 consecutive school days immediately preceding and including the official count dates (October 6, 2003 and February 2, 2004). Even if the student has not missed 10 days as of the count date, a district cannot count the student if: 1) the student has enrolled in another district; OR 2) the district has received notice verbally or in writing that the student will no longer be attending; OR 3) the student had records transferred to another school; OR 4) the student is otherwise unable to continue attendance (death, detention, etc.) (ARM 10.20.102) OPI Contact: Tal Redpath, (406) 444-3024, or [redpath@state.mt.us](mailto:redpath@state.mt.us).

##### **FY04 Final Budgets Due September 8**

The FY 2002-03 Trustees' Financial Summary (TFS) and FY 2003-04 Final Budgets are due to OPI by September 8 (2nd Monday in September). OPI Contact: Nica Carte, (406) 444-4401, [ncarte@state.mt.us](mailto:ncarte@state.mt.us).

**Contract Soon for FY 2002-03 Audits:** If you haven't already done so, please contact your auditor soon to arrange an audit of FY 2002-03. School districts that spent more than \$300,000 of Federal assistance last year, including USDA commodities, must submit an "A-133" (aka "Federal") audit report for FY 2002-03 to OPI by March 31, 2004. Districts that spend less than \$300,000 of Federal assistance must have a "regular" audit and submit a report to OPI within one year of the close of the fiscal year (i.e., FY2002-03 audits are due to OPI by June 30,

2004). Very small districts with less than \$200,000 of total revenues in all funds combined must have an audit "review" every four years upon OPI request. OPI Contact: Jim Oberembt, (406) 444-1257, or [joberembt@state.mt.us](mailto:joberembt@state.mt.us).

### **New Clerk Training Scheduled for November**

The Montana Association of School Business Officials (MASBO) will hold a training session for new district clerks on November 13 and 14, 2003, in Helena. Any interested clerks, superintendents, or county superintendents are encouraged to attend. There is a charge for the workshop. Contact: Lynda Brannon, Executive Director of MASBO, (406) 442-5599 or [masbo@in-tch.com](mailto:masbo@in-tch.com).

### **Approved Bus Routes**

Please remind bus drivers—Buses must be driven on routes as approved by the county transportation committee. Routes must not be altered without the county transportation committee's approval. Running alternative routes without approval may result in state and county overpayments that are subject to refund. Altering routes might also expose the district to unnecessary liability risks. OPI Contact: Maxine Mougeot, (406) 444-3095 or [mmougeot@state.mt.us](mailto:mmougeot@state.mt.us).

### **November High School Bus Rider Count No Longer Needed!**

SB 424 repealed the November high school bus rider count. Bus size, or "rated capacity," now determines the mileage reimbursement rate per mile for the district's bus routes. OPI Contact: Maxine Mougeot, (406) 444-3095 or [mmougeot@state.mt.us](mailto:mmougeot@state.mt.us).

### **FY 2003-04 Bus Route Forms**

TR-1 Bus Route Forms are due to the County Superintendent by October 1 and to OPI by October 15.

- 1) Forms were pre-filled with last year's bus information and posted at <http://www.metnet.state.mt.us/schoolfinance/0000D9D9-80000007/00017A9B-80000007/>.
  - 2) Blank forms are under <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/PupilTransport/index.html>
  - 3) An optional OPI form (TR-2) is available to help track students on each route, <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/pdf/pupiltransport/TR-2.pdf>.
- OPI contact: Maxine Mougeot, (406) 444-3096 or [mmougeot@state.mt.us](mailto:mmougeot@state.mt.us).

### **10 Hours Per Year Bus Driver Training Requirement**

- 1) Standards adopted by the Board of Public Education in 2002 require a minimum of 10 hours of training for school bus drivers each year. This includes substitute drivers. Each district must design and implement a training program using the guidelines and requirements found in the 2003 Yellow School Bus Standards. <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/pdf/pupiltransport/busstds.pdf>  
OPI has a variety of videos on bus driving techniques and bus safety issues that are available for district use.
- 2) Kalispell Schools to Host Driver Training on September 6, 2003. Registration form is posted: <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/pdf/pupiltransport/KalispellReg.pdf>
- 3) Fromberg Schools to Host Driver Training on October 17, 2003: Contact Renee Shanks, (406) 668-7649. OPI Contact: Maxine Mougeot, (406) 444-3096 or [mmougeot@state.mt.us](mailto:mmougeot@state.mt.us).

### **School Finance Forms and Publications on Internet**

Need an attendance agreement /tuition form? Transportation forms? Elections calendar? General information about school budgeting and accounting? See the School Finance area of the OPI website for forms and publications at

<http://www.opi.state.mt.us/schoolfinance/forms.html>. Let us know if you are looking for a particular form, and we'll do our best to provide it electronically!  
OPI Contact: Nica Carte, (406) 444-4401 or [ncarte@state.mt.us](mailto:ncarte@state.mt.us).

### Special Education

#### **Medicaid Administrative Claiming**

The Office of Public Instruction (OPI) is participating in a statewide program to increase the amount of Medicaid reimbursable dollars available to school districts and cooperatives. One of a number of options that is coming to schools as a result of Montana refinancing of Medicaid school-based services is the Medicaid Administrative Claiming (MAC) program. This new program is in addition to the changes that have already occurred with the direct services program. The MAC program uses processes and procedures that are very different from the direct service program to gain funding for the schools.

The Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) is the sponsoring agency for the MAC program. An overview of the program, including duties and responsibilities, as well as anticipated benefits, is detailed below. Every district and cooperative is encouraged to participate in an effort to capture and receive the greatest allotment of Medicaid reimbursement monies available. A district must be enrolled in Medicaid to participate in this program.

#### *Program Background*

The MAC program is directed to all Medicaid-eligible and potentially eligible students. The MAC reimbursement is based on school district staff who, as part of their routine job duties, help students and their families learn about Medicaid, apply for Medicaid benefits, refer students to community medical and mental health providers or collaborate with other school staff or community agencies to better address the health care needs of students. One of the requirements for a district to receive funding through the MAC program is that the district is enrolled in Medicaid (districts that are currently billing for direct services are already enrolled Medicaid providers). In an attempt to emulate other successful state-sponsored MAC programs, the DPHHS has contracted with MAXIMUS to assist in the administration of the MAC program.

#### *How Does It Work?*

- ☐ Sign a Memorandum of Understanding with DPHHS
- ☐ Choose staff on a quarterly basis to be included in the statewide sample and provide MAXIMUS with a roster of those selected
- ☐ Require staff to participate in one hour of training annually
- ☐ Distribute, collect and return time study forms
- ☐ Identify the expenses associated with the selected staff at the end of each quarter

#### *What Does It Mean To My District?*

National indicators predict that school districts can expect to earn approximately \$4 to \$6 per enrolled student, per quarter. Therefore, for example, a conservative estimate of revenues for a district with a K-12 enrollment of 750 students would amount to \$16,000 on an annual basis. (Please note that these are estimates based on experience in other states. Actual revenue Montana districts might generate through participation is unknown.)

In order for districts and cooperatives to establish full eligibility, each must designate a MAC Coordinator who will receive a packet of materials with detailed program guidelines, templates for submitting employee rosters and other instructional material. The program will officially start October 1, 2003, and districts will have a second opportunity to enroll in the program for the

quarter beginning in January 2004. MAXIMUS Contact: Nora Paape, 847-989-7562, [norapaape@maximus.com](mailto:norapaape@maximus.com).

### **Training for Medicaid Programs in Schools**

#### **□ Medicaid Direct Billing Program Update Training**

The Department of Public Health and Human Services along with the Office of Public Instruction have been working hard on making improvements to the Medicaid School-Based Direct Billing Program. This training highlights the changes in the program and what those changes mean to your district. New billing codes, new services and improvements to certification of match processes are some of the topics to be discussed.

##### *Who should attend?*

- Medicaid Billing Clerk of districts currently billing Medicaid for direct services provided in schools
- Districts interested in beginning to bill Medicaid for direct services provided in schools
- Any interested providers

#### **□ Medicaid Administrative Claiming Program (MAC) Time Study Training**

The Department of Public Health and Human Services is proud to announce that the Medicaid Administrative Claiming program will begin in Montana in October 2004. School districts can now get reimbursed for administrative activities that support the Medicaid health-related services being provided to students in the district. If your district has already enrolled in the MAC program and you have been chosen to participate in the Random Moment Time Study, then this training is for you. If your district has not enrolled in the program, please contact Alan Andrus at [alanandrus@maximus.com](mailto:alanandrus@maximus.com) for further information.

##### *Who should attend?*

- School district MAC Coordinators who are interested in knowing more about the MAC program or who want to pass information on to those school district staff who are chosen for the time study training.

The schedule is as follows:

Date	Location	Times
September 22	Miles City Community College 2600 Dickinson, Room 106 Miles City	Direct Service: 10:30 – Noon MAC: 1:30 – 3:00
September 23	Northern Hotel 19 N. Broadway, Centennial South Billings	Direct Service: 10:30 – Noon MAC: 1:30 – 3:00
September 24	Bozeman Public Library 220 E. Lamme St. Bozeman	Direct Service: 10:30 – Noon MAC: 1:00 – 2:30
September 25	MCPS Business Building 915 South Ave. West, Board Room Missoula	Direct Service: 10:30 – Noon MAC: 1:30 – 3:00
September 26	Mountain West Bank 12 Third St. NW, Conference Room Great Falls	Direct Service: 10:30 – Noon MAC: 1:30 – 3:00

If you have questions about these trainings please contact your CSPD Regional Training Coordinator or Nora Paape at (847) 989-7562 or [norapaape@maximus.com](mailto:norapaape@maximus.com).

### ***We Teach All Kicks Off on September 25 in Missoula***

This one-day meeting for *We Teach All* teams will be a great time of professional growth, inspiration, planning and sharing. It will be a time for teams that have already developed action plans to meld philosophy and goals into implementation. For teams still developing action plans, it will be a time of learning, evaluating and planning. Some teams may find that the action plans they developed last spring need change or revision in the light of a new year. This will be the time to make those decisions and to come together as a team to improve your school. All the *We Teach All* Teams in the state are invited and the new teams from CSPD Regions 2 and 5 are particularly encouraged to attend. The Kickoff will begin at 8:30 a.m. and conclude by 4:30 p.m. Lunch is provided and we will pay mileage for one vehicle per school. You will only need to pay for lodging and other meals. OPI Contact: Dick Trerise, Coordinator, School Improvement Grant, Special Education Division, 406-444-1579, [dtterise@state.mt.us](mailto:dtterise@state.mt.us).

### **OPI/MCASE Directors of Special Education Conference**

The Fall Conference for directors of special education will be held in Helena at the Holiday Inn on September 18-19th. The agenda includes: a business meeting of the Montana Council of Administrators of Special Education (MCASE), an overview of progress on the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Medicaid administrative claiming and direct service billing, new director's training & orientation, and information on the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). The meeting begins with a continental breakfast at 8 o'clock on Thursday, September 18th and concludes at noon on Friday, September 19th. OPI Contact: Bob Runkel, 406-444-4429, or [brunkel@state.mt.us](mailto:brunkel@state.mt.us)

## **AMERICA'S LEGISLATORS BACK TO SCHOOL WEEK**

**September 15-19, 2003**

During September 15 through 19, Montana legislators will be joining their counterparts throughout the nation by participating in America's Legislators Back to School Week. This program gives legislators in all 50 states the opportunity to meet personally with their young constituents and to answer questions, share ideas, listen to concerns, and impart a greater understanding of the legislative processes necessary for developing effective public policy.

Sponsored by the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), the program is designed to teach young people -- the nation's future voters and leaders -- what it's like to be a state legislator: the processes, the pressures, and the debate, negotiation and compromise that are the very fabric of representative democracy. It also focuses state legislators on civic education during the same week all across the country, building personal links between schools and legislators and providing legislators an opportunity to observe what is going on in schools.

NCSL has prepared resource materials for legislators including suggestions for age-appropriate activities with students. Follow-up materials produced for teachers to use in the classroom include a student booklet and video titled *Your Ideas Count*. Additional information for principals and teachers, including a teacher's guide and lesson plans, can be found at <http://www.ncsl.org/public/trust/teachers.htm>.

Legislators will be contacting principals and teachers in their districts in mid- to late August to arrange classroom visits with interested educators during the week of September 15. If this week is not convenient, legislators are encouraged to schedule a visit for another time that works better.

For more information about this program, contact Lois Menzies, Legislative Services Division by phone at (406) 444-3066 or by e-mail at [lomenzies@state.mt.us](mailto:lomenzies@state.mt.us).